The Progressive Review

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Immigration & the farm crisis

One effect of the hastily passed immigration bill is certain — it will further strengthen an agricultural interlock between the United States and Latin America. And that is going to do even more to harm small farmers up here and down there. The immigration law wants to cut down on the flow of Latin immigrants by slapping sanctions on employers. Yet at the same time it allows a generous guest worker program with good chances for residential legalization which will provide growers with a steady stream of cheap field labor.

That labor is not just necessary for hefty farm profits and low food prices for American consumers, but to develop a growing food export market in Latin America. Over 40% of US farm output now goes for export. Yet because of an astonishing world food glut, more and more of the world's markets are shrinking for US farm exports. Latin America, as one of the world's main food deficit regions, is becoming a key market for US-grown food.

Latin America has 16% of the world's arable land, yet only six percent of its population. In principle, Latin America should be able to share in the kind of farm miracles that have recently taken place in Europe and just about all of Asia. Yet peasants are abandoning small farms in droves to stream into immense cities, while the arable land is being taken over by export-oriented farm enterprises.

In the US, too, small farmers are being squeezed off the land. That land is being taken over by big corporate farm interests which produce mounds of grains. Those staple gains increasingly serve to feed the urban and much of the rural populations of Latin America. The daily food of tortillas, rice and beans of more and more Latin Americans these days is made in the USA.

Meanwhile, Latin American farms, also tending toward large-scale size, are producing vegetables, fruits, and luxury crops like drugs for the American markets. What is left over goes for local consumption. Taken together, all this forms the US-Latin agricultural interlock whose victims on both continents are small farmers.

Yet small farmers are the key factor in the European and Asian farm miracles. Today, all of Western Europe produces so much food that Europeans quip it would be cheaper for them to give away their stockpiles of wheat, meat and butter than to sell it.

The farm miracles of Asia are even more remarkable. Japan's tiny peasantry produces a glut of food. China, shifting back to the independent small farmer, now produces more than enough food to feed its billion-plus people. India, with its 700 million has also become more than self-sufficient in food. Java, a tiny island housing 100 million people, produces more than enough food to feed itself.

The secret to the miracle is the independent small farm family, backed by appropriate technology and generous government support.

That triple key is absent in the Soviet Union, which remains a chronic food deficit region of the world and a major importer of US food. Its large-scale socialist agriculture in many ways resembles the large-scale corporate agriculture of the US. Both are top-heavy in technology and rely on low-paid labor.

It's become evident in the United States that the market-obsessed Reagan administration is making the same mistakes as the Soviets with their socialist planning obsessions. Both think large-scale high-tech farming is more efficient.

But because of that "efficiency," the food lifelines of hundreds of millions of people in the United States and now Latin America are dependent on a few immense farms. If those farms should falter, as they do in the Soviet Union, then those lifelines could be endangered.

It would seem the new immigration law has locked us into an agricultural relationship with Latin America which is going against the grain of farm miracles elsewhere in the world based on the small farmer. —**Franz Schurmann**

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Franz Schurmann teaches history and sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. (C) PNS

Due to the increasingly unfavorable economics of alternative publishing, the Review must, at least for the time being, switch to a newsletter format. We apologize to our readers and hope you will stick with us through these less than joyous times. Remember: there are only 24 more shopping months until the 1988 elections.

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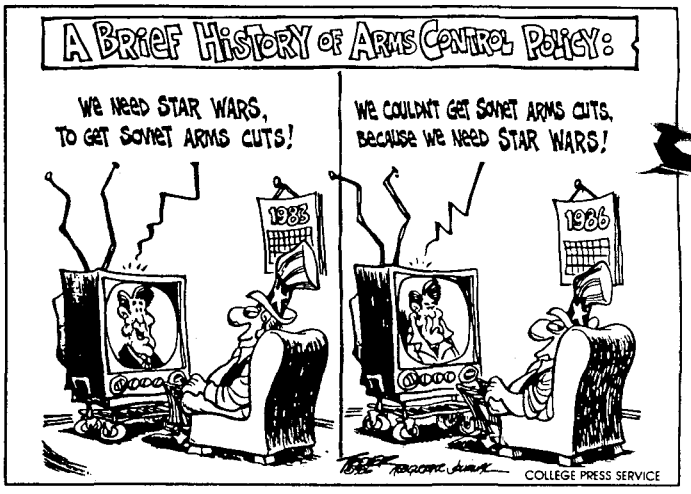
Reagan's quiet army in Central America

The Reagan administration is using what it calls a "low intensity strategy" in Central America to reassure the US public that its policy is neither menacing nor dangerous for US troops. The National Guard is an integral part of this strategy. The Army National Guard participates in military construction, medical and civic-action programs, and military maneuvers to train the Honduran army. This provides a public relations cover for extensive militarization. It also provides for back-door deployment of US troops in Central America. Since they are being sent under the auspices of training, they do not need congressional approval. Air Guards from 15 states in the last year have been flying regularly to Panama, the headquarters of the US Southern Command. From there they make runs into every country in Central America, with supplies, including military supplies. A Californian Air Guard wing has been flying as many as three times a week to Central America out of Van Nuys Air National Guard Base since 1978.

The Air Guard has taken over a task that ten years ago would have been the job of the regular Air Force. Since Richard Nixon's total force policy in 1973, however, the National Guard no longer functions as a state militia. It has become an essential part of the Pentagon. By the end of 1987, 51% of the Army's combat forces and 52% of its support forces will be in the Guard and Reserve. Further, Army reserve components now provide 50% of the special operations forces and 90% of the psychological operations and civil affairs units. National Guard and reserve units cost only a fraction as much as regular military units and the Pentagon can rely on them rather than enlarging the conventional military.

Resistance to this trend has won support from the governors of Massachusetts, Maine, Kansas, New Mexico, Ohio, Vermont, and Washington, who have refused to allow their units to be deployed in Honduras. The governors of New York and Arizona have reserved the right to say no on a case-by-case basis, and the governors of Minnesota and Wisconsin have privately told activists that they would do the same thing. Meanwhile, moves are afoot in Congress to restrict the states' rights to control their Guard units. As assistant Pentagon secretary James Webb put it in congressional testimony: "The governors' authority has become a vehicle to debate or influence foreign policy. This is no longer a case of a few isolated incidents. It is a demonstrated way for dissent groups, state legislators, and state governors to seize a forum to debate foreign policy." — Peggy Moore


A BRIEF HISTORY OF ARMS CONTROL POLICY:
WE NEED STAR WARS, TO GET SOVIET ARMS CUTS!
WE COULDN'T GET SOVIET ARMS CUTS, BECAUSE WE NEED STAR WARS!
1985
1986
COLLEGE PRESS SERVICE

Recon Publications. Peggy Moore is coordinator of the Clearinghouse for Information on the National Guard Issue.

Greens in the US

Although the Green movement continues to show vigor in Europe and its ideas comprise probably the most important new political philosophy since the rise of the social welfare state, Green-oriented activism lags far behind that on the other side of the Atlantic.

There's an irony in this. Last year, Jonathon Porritt, the British author of **Seeing Green** told us: "A lot of us in Europe have been nurtured on the thinking of American greens. One thinks of people like Theodore Roszak, Hazel Henderson, Murray Bookchin, who have provided a vast part of the building up of the philosophy of green politics... And yet, in terms of a movement coming from that in America, it's relatively underdeveloped."

A year later, there are signs that an embryonic green movement is taking shape here but it remains still largely ill-formed, with more potential than reality. Several efforts to give some substance to the American green idea have still to make much headway. It's hard to know what is going on with the theoretically-oriented Committee of Correspondence since it doesn't seem to correspond even with its own mailing list. The Yippies have organized groups in New York City and elsewhere and have started holding conferences and planning an alternative slate for 1988. There is an interesting newsletter, the Green Letter, and Mark Satin's New Options is often green-oriented although NO's options range all over the place, pursuing what Satin refers to a "post liberal" thought. Some local Green parties have also been started.

It is possible, and would not be surprising, that green manifestations in the US will grow in a form quite unlike those in Europe. To a certain extent this has to be true since America, with its odd

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winner-take-all philosophy of democracy creates tremendous obstacles to new parties. Further, what publicity has been given to the greens in America has been centered on die Gruenen, the German greens who are clearly on the left in politics. Thus those who subscribe to the green philosophy of "Neither right nor left, but ahead" are at a disadvantage since the American media is incapable of dealing with more than a few simple ideas at a time. And the German model of green is all it knows or cares about.

Thus, while those sympathetic to the green principles of ecological soundness, decentralism, social justice and non-violence and who want to place those issues at the center of the American political debate may choose to avoid the term **green** at all, at least in public.

You might imagine that the American traditional environmental movement would be fermenting a home-grown form of green politics, but as a recent article by Kirkpatrick Sale in Mother Jones notes, it's not fermenting much of anything these days. A split has grown up between the older environmental groups and the newer ecologists. "Just look at the boards of directors of these environmental groups," says Lorna Salzman, a former Mid-Atlantic representative of Friends of the Earth. "They're the power elite... There's no way you're going to get a populist, decentralist, bioregionalist, radically or socially ecological view."

According to Sale, the dissatisfaction with established groups stems from several concerns:

- They work within the system in ways that ultimately reinforce it.
- By concerning themselves with how best to consume resources, they place human needs above those of other species and the planet as a whole.
- They have been coopted into the world of Washington politics.
- They are so caught up in compromise that they're actually going backwards.

Disputes along these lines have recently split several organizations, including the Sierra Club and the Audobon Society. At Friends of the Earth, the group's founder, David Brower, has left the board. He is now with Earth First! which is putting out an excellent magazine revolving around green concerns. There are a wealth of regional and local ecological groups that are far more radical and action-oriented than the traditional organizations. Some larger efforts, Greenpeace being perhaps the most notable, have adopted a far less passive style than is typical of the Washington environmental lobbies. Outside the environmental movement, some groups are having an important if unheralded effect, such as SANE which has seen a twenty-fold increase in its membership since the supposed haydays of peace groups in the 1960s.

None of these efforts, however, have managed to match die Gruenen and other European greens in moving from specific issues to creating a holistic political philosophy that others must at least respond to if not accept. That we must create an ecological politics in this country or suffer terribly for the lack of it is clear enough. What remains murky is the true catalyst for this politics.

SOME GREEN & POST-LIBERAL GROUPS & PUBLICATIONS

Earth First, 13 Columbus Ave, San Francisco CA 94111
Green Letter, PO BOX 9242, Berkeley, CA 94709
Action Linkage, Box 2240, Wickenburg, AZ 85358
New Options, PO Box 19324, DC 20036
Mid-Atlantic Greens, PO Box 392, Canal St Station, NYC 10012
Greenpeace, PO Box 3720, DC 20007

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The Weather Report

Politics

- A poll by the Joint Center for Political Studies has found that Reagan has increased his support among blacks in two years from 8% to 24%. The poll also found that only 49% of blacks described themselves as "strong Democrats," a figure that dropped to 37% for blacks younger than 30.
- The Democratic Party, already burdened by a bunch of vehemently centrist politicians who are being given loving attention by the media (although thankfully not in the polls), now is faced with a group of big-money donors who want to call the shots. Called Impac '88, the group hopes to raise $10 million. Chief organizer is real estate developer Nathan Landow who calls the organization "a little fraternity" which plans to endorse a candidate. Among those who have already appeared before it are Cuomo and Hart, not to mention the herd in the extremist middle. Says Fred Wertheimer, president of Common Cause: "They appear to be interested in restoring fat-cat rich contributors to a disproportionate influence in the Democratic Party."

The Sexes

- A record 51 women entered federal or top state races this year. Included were six candidates for the Senate and nine for governorships. According to the Christian Science Monitor, women appear to be doing

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Only 5400 nuclear "mishaps"

There were over 5,400 mishaps at nuclear power plants in 1984 and 1985, according to a new study released by Public Citizen's Critical Mass Energy Project, a research organization founded by Ralph Nader.

Moreover, according to every major measure available to evaluate nuclear plant safety, the nuclear industry's record has worsened considerably. The year 1985 was the worst on record for nuclear safety and 1984 was almost as bad.

The *1984-1985 Nuclear Power Safety Report* is based on dozens of government documents obtained by Public Citizen through the Freedom of Information Act and from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). They reveal that the safety of the 96 million Americans who live within 50 miles of one of the 100 licensed-to-operate nuclear power plants was threatened daily by numerous accidents, near-misses, emergency plant shutdowns, and cases of inept management.

Key findings presented include:

-- There were almost 3,000 mishaps reported to the NRC by nuclear utilities in 1985, a 23% increase over the previous year. For the two-year period more than 5,400 mishaps were reported. As many as 35% more may have gone unreported.

-- The average number of mishaps at nuclear power plants was 26 per plant in 1984; in 1985, the average rose to 31 mishaps per reactor. No operating reactors were mishap-free in either year.

-- There were also 18 nuclear accidents during this period -- a record number -- that were so serious that the NRC was compelled to report them to Congress. Both in 1984 and 1985, roughly 10% of the country's plants experienced at least one of these accidents.

-- There were over 750 emergency plant shutdowns in 1985 -- a 28% rise over 1984. These shutdowns averaged about two per day or nearly one every six weeks at each plant.

-- In 1985, nine plants -- accounting for 12% of the country's nuclear capacity -- were indefinitely closed due to various safety problems or management shortcomings. These included all five plants operated by the Tennessee Valley Authority -- one of the largest and most ambitious nuclear utilities in the country.

-- Virtually all of the nuclear mishaps involved human error; yet, during the 1984-1985 period, the quality of plant management -- and consequently safety -- deteriorated.

-- In 1984 and 1985, the NRC fined nuclear utilities for more than 70 separate violations. Notwithstanding the numerous safety problems which prompted these fines, the total dollar amount levied ($6 million) was so small that it is unlikely to be a deterrent to utilities that operate their plants in an unsafe manner in the future.

"There is every reason to believe that an accident as serious as Chernobyl can happen here," according to Ken Bossong, Director of Public Citizen's Critical Mass Energy Project.

He noted that during 1984 and 1985, U.S. reactors came perilously close to experiencing a catastrophic accident on several occasions. For example:

-- An accident at the Sequoyah-1 nuclear plant near Chattanooga, Tennessee in 1984 caused 16,000 gallons of hot radioactive water to spill and nearly killed eight workers.

-- A June 1985 accident at the Davis-Besse nuclear power plant 20 miles from Toledo, Ohio bore disturbing similarities to the 1979 Three Mile accident.

-- In December 1985, a 26-minute loss of power to the computer system at the Rancho Seco plant near Sacramento, California resulted in an overcooling of the reactor vessel which could have caused it to rupture.

"The message from the operating experience of U.S. reactors in 1984 and 1985 is clear," according to the report's author Joshua Gordon. "The plants are unsafe and their safety record is getting worse. The haphazard and lax manner in which the NRC regulates nuclear power is increasing the risks to which Americans are exposed."

"The likelihood and consequences of a major accident were dramatically demonstrated by the Chernobyl disaster," adds Bossong. "That accident, coupled with the findings of this report, strongly argues for rapidly phasing out the U.S.'s nuclear power program."

Public Citizen's 69-page 1984-1985 Nuclear Power Safety Report *is available from the Critical Mass Energy Project for $10.00. Copies of Public Citizen's earlier annual reports on nuclear safety are also available. Critical Mass Energy Project, c/o Public Citizen, 215 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003.*

Northern Sun News

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better on Republican tickets because Republicans are more loyal to their party. While the Democratic platform embraces women's issues, some Democrats fear that a woman candidate would not fare well with such constituencies as blue collar or southern white voters.

• College women are in their second school year without much of Title IX, and women's groups say it's getting harder to force schools to pay attention to them. The Supreme Court effectively gutted Title IX, which said colleges would lose their federal funds if they discriminated on the basis of gender. Women's groups had used Title IX to force colleges to adopt ways for women to appeal campus sex harassment cases, to hire and grant tenure to female faculty members and to begin funding women's athletics on a comparable basis with men's sports. All that's over now, some say. "In funding women's athletics and in sexual harrassment cases, if a school has no policy in place, students in most states have no recourse," contends Bernice Sandler, head of the Project on the Status and Education of Women. "We've lost an enormous amount of ground but, as yet, we don't even know how much we've actually lost," says Ellen Vargyas, an attorney for the National Women's Law Center. The Supreme Court's ruling was so vague, she adds, that the US Department of Education, which is supposed to make sure colleges don't discriminate, has pretty much given up trying to enforce what's left of Title IX. — CPS

• New York's Board of Education has voted unanimously to require sex education for students in that city's public schools beginning next year. The board also voted to extend by six months the contracts of health care clinics that prescribe birth contol for students.

• US health officials say that congenital syphilis is on the rise after years of steady decline thanks to the start of penicillin treatment in the 1950s. The National Centers for Disease Control says th increase is due to the health system's failure to diagnose and treat poor, urban women for the venereal disease.

WAGES AS A PERCENT OF WHITE MALE EARNINGS

Hispanic male	69%
Black male	68%
White female	63%
Black women	56%
Hispanic female	52%

Source: National Commission on Working Women

Civil Liberties

• California governor Deukmejian has vetoed a bill that would require any person convicted of a misdemeanor and placed on probation to undergo

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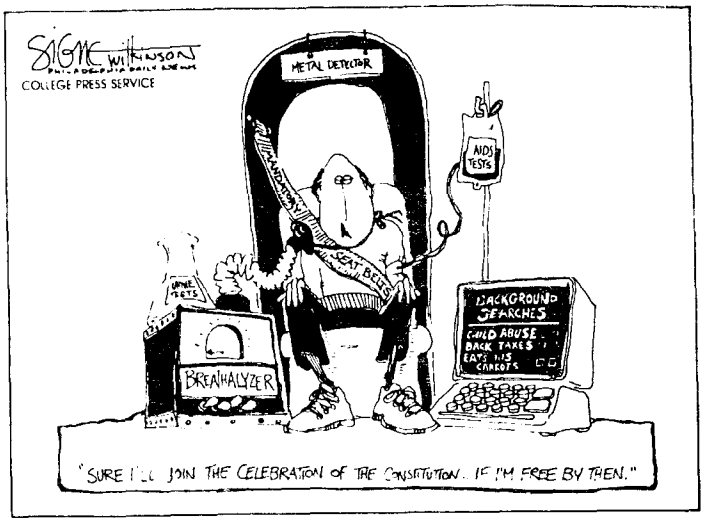

psychiatric treatment if mental health officials said it was desirable. If the person refused treatment, which presumbly could include mind-altering drugs, the probation would be invoked. Sponsor of this Orwellian piece of legislation: erstwhile radical Tom Hayden.

Nicaragua

• Here are a few factors to keep in mind in considering the Eugene Hausenfas case:

• The Neutrality Act prohibits private groups from lending support to military attacks on governments with whom the US has diplomatic relations.

• The Arms Control Export Act prohibits the export of arms without a license.

• The CIA has been prohibited from aiding the Contras since 1984.

• The supply mission was in contravention of the World Court decision of June 27.

• Thomas Klubock at the Institute for Policy Studies notes that the US has invaded Nicaragua nine times. The first invasion was led by an American journalist, William Walker, who in 1855 organized an "American phalanx" which conquered the country. Walker declared himself president, reinstituted slavery and established English as the official language. Other Central American countries eventually defeated Walker's army and restored Nicaraguan autonomy. Another high point came in 1926 when US troops went to Nicaragua to "restore stability and order" and, in the words of Secretary of State Kellog, to protect US interests from the "spectre of Russian and Mexican Bolshevism."

Drugs

• Ken Kesey has suggested a novel way to protest the rising clamor for urine testing. On the road promoting his latest book, Demon Box, Kesey said, "I've started a campaign to have everybody send a bottle of piss to Nancy Reagan. We're gonna sell these little padded envelopes. We can deluge the White House in piss."

• One of the worst covered stories of the past few decades is the curious interplay between American foreign policy and drug policy. At the center of this has been our old friend, the CIA. For example, during the Second World War, the heroin

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trade dried up, but within a few years after the war it was booming again. The CIA's efforts to build anti-communist groups in Europe resulted in trade-offs with gangsters and drug dealers such as in Marseille, a major battlefront between the agency and the French Communist Party. The CIA recruited gangsters to break strikes led by the communists and, in return, the gangsters could resume the drug trade. Similar activities took play elsewhere in Europe and later in Southeast Asia. Today, it would appear, it is still going on. Martin A. Lee, co-author of Acid Dreams, a new book looking at the agency's use of LSD in mind-control experimentation, says: "The Nicaraguan contras are heavily involved in cocaine trafficking, and the US-backed Afghan rebels are major players in the poppy trade."

Nuclear News

• Some four thousand women in Finland are saying no to the nuclear family. They have declared that they will not bear children until the government closes down all its nuclear power plants. The women, all from the University of Tampere in northern Finland, want the plants, which supply about 40% of the country's power, closed by 1990.

• Forty-nine American nuclear plants have containment systems similar to the Chernobyl nuclear reactor... A federal judge in New Jersey has struck down a nuclear free zone ordinance there calling it an unconstitutional and unenforceable infringement of federal powers to regulate the nuclear industry. The ruling is a threat to some 118 NFZs in American communities.

The Green Movement

• Bavarian Greens, in the wake of Chernobyl, won 7.4% of the vote in recent state elections, up from 4.6% in 1982. The Greens are expected to get 16 seats in the legislature.

What's happening

• **Catalog of energy-efficient and resource-coserving products** available for $2 from the Fund for Renewable Energy and the Environment, 1001 Conn. Ave. NW (638), DC 20036.

• **The Great Atlantic Radio Conspiracy** has a catalog of cassettes on progressive issues. 2743 Maryland Ave, Balt Md. 21218

• **War Resisters League Calendar** for 1987 features movies that have a theme of peace and social justice. Some 150 films are cited with stills from 54 of them. WRL, 339 Lafayette St., NYC NY 10012.

• **Secret Air War in El Salvador.** For a free copy of RECON's fall issue write RECON, PO Box 14602, Philadelphia Pa 19134.

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